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The Review of Religions

Vol. XXXVI, No. 5

May, 1937

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QADIAN, Punjab : India

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Review of Religions

Vol. XXXVI MAY, 1937 No. 5.

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

نحمده ونصلي على رسوله الكريم

CONVERSION *VERSUS* COMPULSION

Universalism—an Impetus to Irreligion

[BY MOHAMMAD HUSSAIN, B. COM.]

When Mr. Gandhi asked Sir Francis Younghusband to tell the Parliament of Religions which is the best religion, the latter replied that to every man his is the best. Sir Younghusband's reply sums up the attitude of the Modernist Movement in religion. The notion is very dazzling and drugs people into a false sense of security. But its glamour is equalled only by its speciousness.

Religions die, while Religion lives. There is the law of natural selection vigorously at work even in the domain of faiths and creeds. Many religions which still linger, seek to derive their strength from their pre-historic antiquity and observe a lofty indifference to their serious lack of appeal to modern mind. If we pur-sue this way of thinking to its logical conclusion, we shall have perforce to prize a fossil more than a modern liveable flat. But as things are we find that even the few and feeble antiquarian scientists who value fossils, cannot forego a flat.

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Cure for defeatism

Finding their smug complacency broken by a wave of modernism, the votaries of the old fossilised religions are seeking a cure for their defeatism, in coining a new creed of universalism, woven round by gossamer phraseology which does not bear any realistic interpretation. They offer evasive definitions of religion, which do not improve matters and a layman is sometimes led to feel that religion is swimming out of his ken and is fast becoming a luxury of the intellectual grandees.

Modern universalism is a *de lux* edition of the old-world mysticism which flooded the east with introverts who would like to jump out of their skins and sally forth into the ethereal world of ideas. It is encouraging irreligion among a section of modernists who dare not hitch their wagon to the smoking star of agnosticism, but at the same time find themselves too busy with their mundane pursuits to face the practical implications of religion. These "religious-minded irreligionists" are the first to welcome a voice which tells them that all religions are good in their place and proselytising is a religious aggressivism. But the idea is too preposterous to be believable. There can be no democracy of religions in the sense in which some modernists want to preach it. It is measuring religious values by political yardsticks, with the result that religion loses caste with the people. John Morley was right when he said, "That strange and sinister method of assault upon religion which we of later day watch with wondering eyes, and which consists in wearing the shield and device of faith, and industriously shouting the cry of a church, the more effectually to reduce the faith to a vague futility and its outward ordering to a piece of ingenuously reticulated pretence."

Scepticism of the West

West hails the idea of universalism because it is full of extroverts who do not like their self-satisfaction to be invaded by any resounding call purporting to be

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from on High, warning them of their devious ways and directing them into new constructive channels. They naturally resent any one telling them " That which thou sowest is not quickened except it die." I say " naturally," because there is mental sloth which results from a constant occupation of mind with one particular work, and a change, or a radical change which a perfect religion seeks to effect, means forgetting all old and learning all new. We can overcome this attitude of mind, if, in the words of Josiah Royce we succeed in telling these people that " Revision does not mean mere destruction. But we can sometimes see in the world of opinion a sort of resurrection of the dead—a resurrection wherein what was indeed justly sown in dishonour is raised in honour —glorified—and perhaps incorruptible. Let us bury the natural body of Tradition. What we want is its glorified body, and its immortal soul."

Religious obscurantism is a malady which has overwhelmed an Occidental mind. Western people do resent a trumpet-call which says, "I am come that ye might have life and have it more abundantly." They labour under the delusion that they already have too much of it.

Achilles Heel

Moreover they are matter-of-fact people, they are unable to accept a creed which does not offer them anything palpable. If at all they accept it, as some do, they regard it as a mental pastime—as an *escape* literature. They do not at all believe that it will do them any real good. Here lies their Achilles Heel. If some religion claims to cater to man's body, mind and soul, it stands a great chance of making a victorious entry in the West.

In the East, a class of people has sprung up who resent religious preaching and sometime regard it as a great menace. Dr. Rabindranath Tagore betrayed this attitude at the Parliament of Religions when in his

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presidential address, he said, "when a religion develops the ambition of imposing its doctrine on all mankind, it degrades itself into tyranny and becomes a form of imperialism." It is an expression of "the psychology of fear". When a follower of any religion protests against the right of conversion, he confesses the inadequacy of his own faith and the superiority of the rival creed.

The sage of Santiniketan would deny the people the right of converting others, without pausing to think that he himself is exercising it in the very act of denying it to others. The great founders of religions — a big galaxy of august Prophets, propagated their religion by inducing people to enter their fold. Religion and missionary activities go together, otherwise the different creeds held by different people would not have reached us. They, on the other hand, would have stagnated and festered at the source. When God from His throne of mercy inspired the noble souls, known to history as Prophets, He meant His light to be carried to others. It was a kind of divine "ventriloquism"—word of God emanating from the mouths of the Prophets.

Neo-Platonism

The sponsors of the conception of universalism confuse themselves and others by a deceptive reasoning. They think that the bewildering variety of religions is not illusory, but is a fundamental human need, all the surer because it has found such varied expression.

They go further and say, should religious system be unified by reference to some common tenet within them all, or rather by reference to a common impulse that is offered at every shrine, whether the Supreme Power be named Jupiter or Minerva, Isis or Serapis, Mithras or Magna Mater? Despite the countless forms, some noble, some puerile, some attractive, some even repellent and nauseating under which adoration is offered, to some Being outside Man's own 'self,' is it

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not the same spiritual necessity that is being met, and that must always be met by some species of worship? What does this logic signify? Nothing, but crumbs of consolation picked up with awkward avidity. In this very fashion many a pagan thinker reasoned within himself about the heritage to which he was born. It is an unabashed expression of Neo-platonism which Matthew Arnold gave us in his famous lines:

> Children of men! the unseen Power whose eye
> For ever doth accompany mankind,
> Hath looked on no religion scornfully
> That man did ever find.

A Wrong Notion

It is intriguing to note that those who are loudest in their advocacy of the utilitarian motto of the greatest good of the greatest number, have set their faces against the right of conversion. Perhaps they do not believe in propagating spiritual good and want to keep their religions as exotic preserves for themselves alone. Or perhaps they cherish some flagrantly wrong notion of religious conversion and no sooner do they talk of proselytising, than their innate prejudices colour the whole sense-pageant, and their ears begin to be assailed by the din of arms, and a scene of bloodshed conjures up before their vision.

This attitude is tantamount to taking conversion for compulsion—two terms which in their meanings are as poles apart. Conversion signifies a change which takes place in mind either voluntarily or under the influence of some convincing communication or a message, conveyed orally or through the printed word. It is not accompanied by threats of physical violence. But it is certainly accompanied by promises of more bliss and blessings, in case it is accepted; and spiritual imperfection in case it is rejected. It is like holding out a cup of fresh water to a thirsty man. The one who offers must needs say that the water is

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free from contamination and will surely quench thirst and then leave it to the thirsty man to accept or reject the offer at his own risk.

Weapon of the Weak

It is exactly in this fashion that a true religion enjoins its preaching. It is this which marks it out of its false imitations. It is too confident of its strength to resort to compulsion which is the weapon of the weak. An advocate of some fallacious or weak idea believes more in force than in persuasion to extort its acceptance. Failing to get at heart, he takes good care to gag the mouth and sometime trusses up the whole body. Human nature revolts against such vandalism and hates such a creed with a perfect hatred, as it gives headache and heartache, and it is not more lasting than an edifice raised on the shifting sands of a desert.

Compulsion is building from above, hence the futility of it. A true missionary religion would scrupulously avoid this brutal method, because religion comes to spiritualise the world and not to turn it into a howling wilderness. Islam is essentially a missionary faith. It is for the world, and a true believer is enjoined to share his spiritual attainments with others. He must carry the light to the ends of the earth. He is not safe only by saving himself. He must save others to ensure his own safety. In a small chapter in the Holy Quran, God says, " I swear by the world's history —I swear by all the time that has passed before, that all are certainly in perdition but the Faithful, who will do good works and tell others to do the right thing and to have fortitude in case they are successful."

No Compulsion in Religion

The conditions required for a Muslim to win salvation are contained in this short chapter of the Holy Quran. His salvation depends upon these: That he must have faith, that he must act upon

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that faith, that he must go and preach those good things to every body. That he must eschew violence or threat of physical injury in his missionary activities. The last is an important injunction of the Holy Book which says :

لا اكراه في الدين قد تبين الرشد من الغى

(There is no compulsion in religion, indeed guidance is rendered quite distinct from mis-guidance.)

This verse should convey without the shadow of doubt even to the uninstructed minds that Islam strictly forbids compulsion in matters religious. What it lays stress upon, is to present and propound its teachings with a flaming clarity so that people should know right from wrong, and should be able to distinguish Islam from other spiritual aberrations.

Then in the story of Moses and Aaron, where they have been commanded to go to Pharaoh and communicate to him the divine message, the Holy Book clearly chalks out the true lines on which a mission should be preached. We find in the Holy Book the following verses :

إذ هبا إلى فرعون إنه طغى - فقولا له قولاً ليناً لعله يتذكر او يخشى -

(Go both of you to Pharaoh, for he has indeed transgressed all bounds ; but speak to him mildly, perchance he may remember God and take admonition or fear God.)

Peaceful Preaching

Pharaoh in his inordinate vanity has forgotten himself and forgotten the glory of God. His vainglory is running riot. He is to be weaned and won to righteousness. God entrusts this mission to Moses and his brother Aaron (blessings of God be upon them). They are asked to eschew all acrimony and

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bitterness in the communication of their message. They are told that it is quite likely that their soft words might turn away his wrath and he might feel induced to give up his transgression and begin to fear God. If it had been a mundane message from one king to another, it would certainly have been harsh, because the man to be handled was, to all intents and purpose, intractable. Moses who could see the Land of Promise from the rock of Pisgah, but was not allowed to enter, was not to proceed to the tyrant in a revengeful mood.

This is exactly the method which Islam enjoins upon its followers, when they leave their hearths and homes to propagate the word of God. They must not only be meek and mild in conveying the message, but deaden the impact of blow by the velvet softness of their attitude.

Then in the Holy Quran, the Holy Prophet is warned not to be so solicitous about the unbelief of the unbelievers, as to kill himself by his anxiety. His duty is only to present and propound his message to his enemies. It is for them to accept or reject and benefit or suffer accordingly.

If such a peaceful and pacific method of preaching is to be banned and God's light is sought to be cabinned, cribbed and confined to the detriment of the whole humanity, God save such devil's advocates. If the universalists, with the sage of *Gitanjli* fame as their leader, still feel nervous, they suffer from morbid pathology. Their delirious fear of Islam reminds one of the subjects of George III; who, when the Julian calendar was made to correspond with the Gregorian calculations, cried out that their lives would be shortened.

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ISLAM AND PROPHETHOOD

[By Nazir Ahmad Bajwa, M. A., LL. B.]

I

Religion is essentially one and as such Islam claims to be its perfect and eternal form. Its numerical multiplicity owes its origin to two factors. The surface of the globe nowadays is so thickly populated and human advance has so completely conquered all obstacles, offered to intercourse among different peoples, by oceans, mountains and long distances, that we are rather unable to realize how thin and sparse the human occupation of the earth was in ancient times, which were, further, characterised by a total absence of any means of communication. The occasional coming together of various groups was a mere accident of nomadic life, rather than the consequence of an enterprise inspired by social instincts, or economic or political reasons. Under such circumstances religion had of necessity to be confined to a single people. This is precisely the reason why the prophets of ancient times are usually associated with a particular race. As times advanced and contact among scattered races became feasible, God absorbed all teachings in Islam and made it the religion of all peoples.

Perhaps it might be said that this process exactly falls in with the development theory and that the drawing closer of the different parts of the globe provoked, as in the case of Internationalism, a religious movement, entirely the business of man, which sensible to the vast potentialities of the times, aimed at obviating the local character of religion. This hypothesis, however, is as untrue, when applied to religion, as it is true in its explanation of the origin of Internationalism. Between Islam and other religious forms there exists a link, entirely forged by prophecies from God, so clear, unmistakable and past any doubt

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in their reference to prophet Muhammad (May God's peace and blessings be upon him) that one cannot help concluding not only that religion or any advance along its path is not a human effort but also that the diversity of teachings, claiming divine emanation, is, in no way, incompatible with the unity of religion.

The second factor relates to the growing faculty of mankind, which mainly manifests itself in two directions. There is the physical growth, observable year in and year out, in a child gradually assuming the shape of a man. Very much akin to it and yet apart from it, flows from age to age the stream of intellectual development, which always strikes its increasingly-widening course in the fresh fields of Science and knowledge. Yet if the world is marched back to its starting point, the process, besides exhibiting man at the outset like an infant in regard to intellect, will bring to our view quite a variety of temperamental changes, miniature reflection of which may be witnessed even to-day when the influence of modern civilisation is brought to bear upon a savage tribe. In the midst of these variable circumstances, religion could not have been revealed in such a way as to have completely ignored the essential element of human nature. Hence it is that religion claims to have reached in Islam its perfect form, so that Islam is meant not only for all peoples, but also for all ages to come.

II

This attribute of Islam finds one of its expressions in the compound word *Khatamunnabiyyeen*, which has been used in reference to Muhammad (May God's peace and blessings be upon him) to mark his greatness over other prophets. The literal meaning of the word *Khatam* is seal and when it is used as in *Khatamunnabiyyeen*, it denotes the best, the choicest and the most exalted of all. The appellation, properly construed, takes away the possibility of the advent of any prophet who can say to the world, "Leave the religion of Mohammad and come to me, as I bring a

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religious law more perfect than Islam," and thus assumes to himself a position, directly in consequence of his teachings which claim to supersede Islam, not dissimilar to that which the Prophet Muhammad occupies as against others.

The word *Khatamunnabiyyeen* has excited a good deal of controversy, which is simply astonishing. It has been taken to mean by some that the portals of prophethood have been closed for ever. The supporters of this view say that the meaning they attribute to the term "the finality of prophethood" is the only possible interpretation, in view of God, having stated in the Holy Quran, "This day I have perfected your faith for you and completed my favours on you." The latest phase of the arguments advanced on this side of the controversy tends to lay greater emphasis on the claim of Islam to be the perfect creed, as furnishing basis for the proposition that Muhammad (May God's peace and blessings be upon him) is the last of the line of such persons as have, acting under God's revelation, guided mankind from time to time.

This, perhaps, is more logical from their view point; the reason apparently for this being that to be merely placed at the end does not in itself confer any credit upon the prophet, unless his having been so, is an incident, with necessary consequences of Islam being what it claims to be. Now an apostle is usually associated with a new religious teaching, which he reveals from God; but this does not exhaust the whole definition, because instances are not few of prophets, who were nonetheless prophets, even though their advent was unaccompanied by a new religious law. Such being the case, one fails to understand why the door should have been absolutely slammed against prophethood, when an apostle can still come preserving intact the foregoing conception of Islam, and not in the least, detracting from the greatness of Muhammad (May God's peace and blessings be upon him).

It is a common ground between the two views that

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limitations to prophethood spring up from the suitability which Islam claims as a religion, for all peoples and for all ages. There cannot be a prophet, whose advent will have the consequence of superseding Islam. This is because with the revelation of the Holy Quran the faith has been perfected. But the absolute discontinuance of the line of prophets leaves room for conjectures. It might or might not be due to the above reason ; and when it is remembered that God has put into our mouth prayers we repeat so many times in a day, which, if complied with, would have the effect of placing prophethood within the capacity of our spiritual attainment, one may be inclined with a good reason to mingle the so-called doctrine of the Finality of prophethood with the inability of Islam to produce among its followers an apostle, whose sole object will be to remove from the face of Islam the mantle of extraneous ideas and verify and support the teachings of the Holy Quran. The result is inconceivable, because the defect lies neither in Islam nor in the words of God. There can be only one conclusion, which is this, that the conception of Muhammad (May God's peace and blessings be upon him) being the last apostle blends but inharmoniously with the claim of Islam to be the perfect form of religion.

On the other hand, the phenomenon of an apostle can be the only test to determine the truth of the claim of Islam and the greatness of Muhammad (May God's peace and blessings be upon him). The current of prophethood, if considered not to be discontinued, can turn both ways. It can either throw Islam into the background by bringing in its place a religious law more suitable to the present times or furnish it with the strongest proof of its being the perfect form of religion, and what is not less important, leave at its disposal such testimony to show its liveliness and animation as the persons, still clinging to old teachings will be sheerly unable to call to their assistance. If the current, instead of taking the former way, flows into the latter channel, there cannot remain any doubt as to Islam's claim to supremacy, having been

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substantiated. Thus the rational interpretation of the words *khatamunnabiyyeen* leaves the question of prophethood unaffected, save in so far as it is capable of interfering with the supremacy of Islam, which, because Muhammad (May God's peace and blessings be upon him) is the greatest of all apostles, must remain unimpaired.

Dr. Sir Muhammad Iqbal has in his pamphlet *Islam and Ahmadism* (P. 14), explained the doctrine of the Finality of Prophetood in the following words, "Theologically the doctrine is that: The socio-political organization called Islam is perfect and eternal. No revelation, the denial of which entails heresy is possible after Muhammad. He who claims such a revelation is a traitor to Islam. Since the Qadianis believe the founder of the Ahmadiyya movement to be the bearer of such a revelation, they declare that the entire world of Islam is infidel." The explanation falls short of the interpretation, which the Muslims other than Ahmadis put upon the doctrine; according to them Finality implies that, "Divine revelation has been cut off for ever and prophethood has ceased for all times." The learned doctor evades the real issue involved in the question and tries to make the test for determining whether or not prophethood has ceased, dependent upon a contingency which, according to the school of thought he belongs to, cannot by the nature of things take place. This leads one to think that the argument he employs has been inspired not by the true spirit of Islam but by his desire to denounce Ahmadiyyat somehow or other. What surprises us most is the fact that even in the contemplation of facts, which furnish him with the argument, he does not try to grasp the real position.

Let us suppose for a minute that the renowned doctor belonged to the period, which fell immediately prior to the appearance of the Promised Messiah, and that someone approached him and asked him the following question, "Can we have a prophet, who should simply support the teaching of the Quran and

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restore the faith to its pristine beauty? Moses was an apostle of God and he brought a book named Torah, which claimed to be as sufficient a guidance for Israelites as the Quran is for all peoples, and if prophets could come to draw people again to the real teaching of Torah, from which they had drifted away, why can't we, the Muslims have similar experience, when our religion enjoys a position, which no other creed can claim to itself ?" Certainly the answer to such a question will not be delayed, till a prophet has appeared, and the doctor has ascertained his attitude towards such Muslims as refuse to accept him as an apostle of God. If, however, he insists upon following this course, he tacitly admits that there is nothing in Islam, which opposes the notion of the continuity of prophethood. His doubts and apprehensions will be with regard to the nature of prophethood that a person can claim after Muhammad (May God's peace and blessings be upon him).

As a matter of fact, Dr. Sir Muhammad Iqbal does not seem to have appreciated the distinction between the possibility of the appearance of an apostle and the kind of a claim that a prophet can put forth. It needs no reasoning to point out that if prophethood has ceased, all discussion on the second question becomes quite useless. If, however, the possibility exists, then the limitation, that arises tot he nature of prophethood, springs up from the fact that "The socio-political organization called Islam is perfect and eternal, and this only calls for persons, claiming to be divine messengers, remaining within a circle consistent with the conception of the supremacy of Islam.

The test Dr. Sir Mohammad Iqbal lays down, he justifies solely on the necessity of maintaining the solidarity of Islam. But if an apostle can arise within the folds of Islam and he appears, why need we bother about his attitude towards those who do not believe him. The question that immediately attracts our attention is whether his claim is supported by sure and visible signs from God. If he is an apostle in fact, it is

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quite obvious that all those who deny him are not on the right path. Does not the founder of the Ahmadiyya movement say, "God has promised in the Holy Quran an apostle for the latter days. There are prophecies of the Holy Prophet, which speak to the same effect and which have been fulfilled in my person. God has further proved the truth of my claim by signs that have been revealed at my hands. I claim prophethood through obedience to Muhammad and God, and I have been sent to establish once more the kingdom of Heaven, as contemplated in the Holy Quran?" It is impossible to say that this amounts to independent revelation, or that it either abrogates Islam or adds anything to it. On the other hand, the bearer of such a message is a mere reflection of the spiritual glory and greatness of Muhammad, and a living example of the fulfilment of the words of God. If it is embedded in the scheme of religion that prophets should continue to arise from time to time to fight and vanquish the forces of evil, let me ask Dr. Sir Muhammad Iqbal how and in what manner the solidarity of religion as represented by Islam is threatened by the doings of God over which we human beings have no control.

The question of one or the other sect being 'Kafir', on which the doctor has laid so much emphasis, is merely of academic interest. The word *Kufr* means no more then denial and when we use it, we use it in the sense that we are the true Muslims and those who refuse to believe in the revelation of the Promised Messiah are not.

It does not stand to reason to entertain the belief that the conception of religion having reached an eternal form operates to the extent of causing absolute cessation of prophethood. It is impossible to couple perfect state with the idea of diminution. If religion is considered in terms of unity that divine source imparts to it, it will be seen that it has been a practice with the Almighty to raise for the guidance of mankind prophets in every age. Some of these

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ushered in new religious teachings, others were associated with some pre-existing law. Whether they belonged to one or other class, it is agreed on all hands, that they represent in their persons the best specimens of human conduct of every description. In them religion can rightly boast of a remarkable achievement. Now, according to Muslims of all shades, religion assumes its perfect form in Islam. Its complexity before Islam, traceable in the diversity of religious teachings, still retaining their entities, was due solely to the fact that the mental conditions of humanity and the material conditions of the world were not ripe for the beauties of religion being unfolded in their completeness. But what a sad commentary on human progress it is to say that while it has made possible the perfect shape of religion to be introduced, the part it has played in the process has cost human mind its capacity to rise to the perfect stage of its development. And if that is not the true reading, the prophethood must be a disability which attached to religion in its days of imperfect state, that it should vanish once for all, when divine law expands to its normal dimensions. Certainly this cannot be the true Islam.

The mind wearies easily when it strives to grapple with the Infinite, and trace the footsteps of the Almighty from sphere to sphere or deduce His purpose from His works. Such things are not for us to know. Knowledge is to the strong and we are weak. Too much wisdom perchance would blind our imperfect sight, and too much strength would make us drunk, and overweigh our feeble reason till it fell and we were drowned in the depths of our own vanity. For what is the result of man's increased knowledge interpreted from Nature's book by the persistent effort of his purblind observation? Is it not too often to make him question the existence of his Maker, or, indeed, of any intelligent purpose beyond his own? Truth is veiled, because we could no more look upon her glory than we can upon the sun.

—Rider Haggard

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THE TWO VOICES

[The unsuccess of the Crusades filled the Christian mind with defeatism. The whole Christendom quivered and quavered before the ever-conquering horns of the Crescent. Failing to fight Islam and all it stood for, in the open, the churchman and a band of writers possessing a remarkable gift for misrepresenting things, began to scandalise the victorious creed. Book after book tumbled out of press, teeming with facts which were more fictitious than fiction itself. The art of literary cannibalism found a congenial home in churches and monasteries. The "quil-drivers" hired by the church vented their spleen on the Holy Prophet. His glorious life—a sermon on service and sacrifice, was sought to be obscured with fantastic fabrications. For long, the west was fed on the garbage which was dispensed from the *sanctum sanctorum* of these literary scribes. These malicious activities of the church revived the flagging hopes of the Christians, and Islam came to be regarded with awe and suspicion.

Why I slamc ame into disrepute in Europe is due as much to the onslaughts of Christian writers as to the inactivity of the Muslims who took the attacks lying down and did not so much as stir a little finger to reveal Islam in its true colours. Muslims were either apologetic or quiescent. But a change for the better materialised towards the beginning of the last quarter of the 19th century. It marks the dawn of Rennaissance in Islam. Like a noble puissant nation, Islam, in the words of Milton, began to rouse itself like a strong man after sleep and shaking its invincible locks.....as an eagle mewing her mighty youths and kindling her undazzled eyes at the full midday beam.

It was the holy founder of the Ahmadyya Movement whose books ushered in an era of Islamic revival. He was the first man to run the gauntlet and strike effective blows at the creed of the Cross. Islam rose Phœnix-like from its ashes. Some Muslim scholars who had been biding time, took this noble cue from him and bestirred themselves into action. Church hirelings drew in their horns. Christianity was "on the run" in the Moslem world where previously it was engaged in sap-and-mine activities. It is in retreat even in Europe.

The modern European writers have now changed their tune. But it does not mean that the Old Brigade has ceased to exist. Its struggling members now and then hurl themselves into limelight by their literary productions which repeat, though a little differently, the old hackneyed theories which have long been exploded by men of their own flesh and blood. Tor Andrae is one the last of the

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flock. His latest publication *Mohammed: The Man and His Teachings*, is a puny attempt to break lances with Islam. The author suffers from "split personality". His charges are ably rebutted by the late Marmaduke Pickthall, in a scholarly review published posthumously in the *Islamic Culture*. We reproduce it here for the benefit of our readers.—*M. H.*]

Not long ago a professor of Yale University, lecturing to a Jewish audience in New York, proved to his own satisfaction that the Prophet of Arabia was so profoundly versed in Hebrew lore that he might almost be regarded as a learned rabbi. Before that other professors had proved to their satisfaction that Muhammad knew little of Judaism but much of Christianity or that he knew hardly anything of either. Now we have Professor Tor Andrae of Upsala University showing an affinity of some aspects of Islamic lore and practice with those of the Nestorian Church and also of the Manichæans.

But the pursuit of such scholarly conjectures is not the purpose of his book. Its purpose is to present a critical study of the character of Muhammad (God bless and keep him); and here there are **two voices** in his work, one suave and judicial, the other harsh and fanatical. In view of Professor Tor Andrae's reputation for Islamic learning, it must be supposed that this book was hurriedly written, for it is casual and in places self-contradictory, there are many inaccuracies and it abounds in loose and questionable statements. I propose to criticise a few such statements from among those only which affect the author's presentment of our Prophet's character.

Professor Tor Andrae is convinced of Muhammad's absolute sincerity. He considers him a "real prophet", which means apparently (in his vocabulary) one who had a particular psychological experience which the Hebrew prophets had in common with Australian black-fellows. He rules out the idea of deliberate imposture, yet on many pages he seems to write of the Quran as the work of the man Muhammad and even charges him with such manipulation of it as might

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as well be described as deliberate imposture. All this is in the way of learned Arabists who theorise at ease because the learned Muslims who could answer them are not those who are ever likely to come across their lucubrations. We had no suspicion of a less complacent undercurrent in the book till on p. 55 we came upon the following sentence (the italics are our own):

"It is said that he was known by the epithet Al-Amin, 'the reliable', *and even if this designation does not seem to express the most apparent trait of Mohammad's character*, it does show that he had an unusual power of inspiring confidence."

The undercurrent strengthens as the book proceeds. On p. 90, we have:

"When circumstances required, Mohammed did not hesitate to assert that Allah had rescinded His former revelation and substituted another. This principle is made clear in Sura 2, 100"—should be 106—"which dates from the early period in Medina: 'Whatever verses'"—the word means "revelations" as well as verses—"'we cancel or cause thee to forget'"—a mistranslation, it should be "cause to be forgotten"; there is no "thee" in the Arabic—"'we bring a better or its like. *Knowest thou not that Allah has power over all things?*'" (Author's italics.)

Here Prof. Tor Andrae has chosen to follow an absurd tradition. The verse quoted occurs in a long remonstrance with the Jews and refers to the contention of the Jews of al-Madinah, in their efforts to seduce the Muslims, that certain injunctions of the Quran were different from the revelation which God gave to Moses and so could not be of Divine origin. The only cases of *naskh* known to orthodox Muslim authorities are those of progressive legislation as fresh need arose, as in the prohibition of strong drink and games of chance, and those of war-time regulations superseding peace-time ordinances. And the verses are all still in the Quran.

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On p. 106: "According to Sura 9, 60, alms should be given to the poor and needy . . . and to those whose hearts are to be won to Islam—a type of bribery, therefore, used to buy off political opponents." Is it possible that the author did not know that the term "those whose hearts are to be reconciled" is a recognised term for the recently conquered people of Mecca who had already become Muslims?

On p. 124: " . . . he confused the mother of Jesus with Aaron's sister Miriam, and thus at first he seems to have regarded Jesus as an Old Testament prophet." This is an assertion still often made in Christian polemics in spite of its inherent improbability. The Arabs were great at pedigrees and so were the Jews of al-Madinah. Such a mistake would have been pounced on by opponents of Islam. Is any historian prepared to swear that the name of the father of the Virgin Mary was not Imran or that she had not a brother named Aaron?

Prof. Tor Andrae follows other Western theorists in writing as if Muhammad invented the connection of Abraham with the Kaabah. That is not the view of Arabic authorities.

The author accepts a Tradition according to which Muhammad, by a device of Satan, was once beguiled into inserting in the Quran after the names of the three goddess-idols of Quraish the statement: "These are the exalted females and truly their intercession may be expected"—a mistake which he perceived with horror and corrected the same day—and comments:

"Inasmuch as parallels to such opportunism are by no means lacking in Muhammad's later conduct—think, for example, of his attempt to win over the Jews of Medina to his religion—this story of his chance defection has hitherto been generally accepted.

"It is thought that in this incident the unscrupulousness of the future autocrat of Medina is clearly revealed

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and it is believed that these tactics actually achieved some success . . . However, an Italian scholar, Cætani, has attempted to show that the traditional form of the story cannot be correct . . ."

In the context there is something ludicrous in this slighting mention of the late Duke of Sermoneta, the most profound, impartial writer on the subject. The Quran itself, in the passage which this Tradition pretends to explain, clearly refers to a thought or inclination which was never translated into speech or action.

"And they [*i.e.*, the Quraish] strove hard to beguile thee [Muhammad] away from that wherewith We have inspired thee, that thou shouldst invent other than it against Us : and then would they have accepted thee as a friend.

"And if We had not made thee wholly firm thou mightest almost have inclined to them a little.

"Then had We made thee taste a double [punishment] of living and a double [punishment] of dying; then hadst thou found no helper against Us." (xvii, *vv.* 73—75.)

In another Quranic verse (xxii, 51) which the author quotes in this connection, he has mistaken the meaning of the words *tamanna* and *umniyyah* in the context, to the detriment of his own case.

The treatment of the Nakhlah incident calls for longer comment because it is the crux of Prof. Tor Andrae's aspersions and because it shows his method very clearly. The Prophet sent out from al-Madinah in the first year three small reconnoitring expeditions. They went out armed and were to defend themselves, if attacked, but otherwise were not warlike. The last of these expeditions was sent to Nakhlah between Mecca and Taif to spy on the movements of the Quraish. It came upon a weakly-guarded caravan on

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its way to Mecca, attacked the caravan and captured it, with bloodshed. The Prophet, when he heard of it, was very angry but afterwards forgave the culprits because they had not yet learnt the difference between Islamic and pagan warfare. The Meccans made an outcry because of bloodshed in a sacred month. That is the story as told by accepted Tradition. Prof. Tor Andrae is not content with it. He says: "The original wording of this important letter"—*i.e.*, the written order given to the leader of the expedition —"*seems to have been preserved* by Wakidi. 'Go to the valley of Nakhla' it reads, 'and set an ambush for Koreish.' Even *the earliest tradition* felt that this was wrong. This is shown by the fact that the text of the ominous letter has been subjected to various emendations. According to Ibn Ishak it reads: 'Go to Nakhla between Mecca and Taif and there spy on the Koraish in order to bring news concerning them.'" (The italics are ours.)

Prof. Tor Andrae thus admits that he has deliberately related one of several versions of the incident, that it is taken from a work which frankly includes unsound Traditions, and that it is not found among the earliest Traditions. Al-Waqidi noted every report he heard, good, bad or indifferent. It is highly significant of the author's attitude that the version selected should happen to be the only version which could enable him to accuse our Holy Prophet of lying when he declared that he had never ordered the attack on the caravan. Having described the attack as if it had been slily ordered by the Prophet, Prof. Tor Andrae writes:

"But the worst of it all was that the Prophet absolutely repudiated this action and declared that he had in no sense commanded to fight during the sacred month." Then: "What offends is the calculating slyness with which he"—*i.e.*, the Prophet—"cleverly provokes Abdullah's action without assuming any responsibility for what occurred. This event reveals a trait of his character which is particularly uncongenial

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to the ideals of manliness of the Nordic races." Shade of Hitler! These are strong words to use on such a cool assumption. No wonder the author has failed to draw even a shadowy likeness of the Arab Prophet!

On p. 215, the story of Zayd and Zaynab and its relation to a well-known verse of the Quran is presented in a light quite unbecoming the Prophet's dignity, and the more becoming version, which is also more consistent with the text, is never mentioned. It has become a fashion with a certain school of orientalists to regard Traditions which seem to tell against the Prophet as for that reason manifestly true, oblivious of the fact that among the later Companions of the Prophet the majority had been opponents of Islam in early days and knew the Meccan version of an incident or mixed it with the Muslim version, thinking no harm; while the later Muslim experts in Tradition, though they made a careful sifting, were concerned only with the reliability of each link in the chain of transmitters, not with the inherent probability or the reverse of a particular *hadith*.

On p. 237 we read " . . . if, for the time being, it [Islam] tolerated the simultaneous existence of Judaism and Christianity, this was only a *modus vivendi*." If the author means that it was only a temporary concession, the remark is untrue. The Quranic verse he quotes is later than the subject of the paragraph (the trouble with the Jews in al-Madinah), and refers to the first hostilities with the Byzantine Empire.

On p. 258, the words "a quite disgraceful capitulation" applied to a verse of the Quran, which qualifies the previous verse (lviii, 12-13) both telling of an order which was desirable, but not compulsory, seem excessive, even from the author's standpoint. The Prophet is here treated as the conscious author of both verses. Prof. Tor Andrae evidently regards the commandments as to little details of behaviour in the

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Quran as direct, uninspired utterances of Muhammad, and sees in them no use beyond the moment of their utterance. He writes of the "arrogance" of the Prophet more than once, which is against all Tradition, and seems generally to mistake our Prophet's reverential care of Allah's message for personal vanity. From his contemptuous description of the language of the Quran it is evident that he has no ear for Arabic; in one place he describes the magnificent Quranic rhythm as "doggerel", but that may be the fault of the translator.

The whole history of the expulsion of the Jewish tribes from al-Madinah is falsified by omission of the fact that the said Jewish tribes made a covenant with the Prophet in the first year of the Hijrah and so from the Prophet's point of view became citizens of the Islamic State. They are here portrayed as independent, outside critics whom the Prophet punished for the freedom of their criticism. No Jewish tribe or individual was punished for refusing to accept Islam; they were punished as traitors to the theocratic State and, by their support of the pagan Quraish, traitors to Monotheism. The Prophet could be ruthless to traitors as he never was to open enemies, and only where foul treachery is concerned do we find him allowing the contemporary Arab code to function. The Nordic races also dislike treachery in wartime.

In his account of the punishment of Banu Qurayzah, Prof. Tor Andrae mentions their offence as "lack of dependability during the siege". They actually sided with the enemy; they took no part in the defence, shut themselves up in their towers, and were ready to attack the Muslims from behind when the assault came. That is part of the Tradition and one wonders why it is left out. There are other defects in the story as here told. It was not the Prophet who proposed the arbitration in the first place, it was the Jews who begged for it, and the verdict which Sa'd gave was unexpected both by Jews and Muslims. So says Tradition. As Prof. Tor

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Andrae tells the story, the whole arbitration proposal was a cruel deception by the Prophet of the poor Jews who were guilty of nothing more definite than "lack of dependability during the siege". Such capital omissions, and his own peculiar version of the Nakhlah incident, enable Prof. Tor Andrae to find "examples like the Nakhlah incident and the murder of Ka'b b. Ashraf" —a Jew of al-Madinah who urged the Quraysh to attack that city and declared the religion of the pagan Arabs preferable to Islam—"...which show a very repulsive leaning towards craftiness and trickery" —the very last qualities of which an unbiassed student of history would accuse our Prophet.

The author more than once admits that he is far from sure that he is judging fairly; which makes the bitterness of these prepared attacks inexplicable. Concluding his remarks on 'Umar, whom he much admires, he says:

"That such a friend became and remained Muhammed's most loyal helper, in spite of occasional differences of opinion, that the faith and *conduct* [author's italics] of the Prophet because his *Sunna*, his holy custom which he maintained and guarded with unalterable consistency, is the most important and conclusive proof of Muhammed's religious and personal integrity."

As we said, there are **two voices** in this book. Only in the last paragraph which is in the suave, judicial manner do we learn the reason why.

"In spite of everything that can be said in defence of Muhammad's religious integrity and his loyalty to his call, his endurance, his liberality, his generosity, we are not doing the Prophet of Islam injustice when we conclude that his moral personality does not stand upon the same level with his other endowments; and indeed not even upon the same level with his religious endowments. But if we would be fair to him we must not forget that, consciously or unconsciously, we Christians are inclined to compare Mohammed with

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the unsurpassed and exalted figure whom we meet in the Gospels, and that we cannot avoid seeing his historical personality against the background of the perfect moral ideal to which the faith of his followers tried to exalt him. And when it is measured by such a standard, what personality is not found wanting?"

So we may take it that all this questionable special pleading is for the sake of proving that Muhammad (God bless him!) cannot claim the degree of reverence which devout Christians pay to Jesus Christ. He never claimed it, nor do Muslims claim it for him. To have claimed it would have meant betrayal of his mission which was to call men to allegiance not to himself, but to God the Almighty.

In a former work of his, Prof. Tor Andrae has, in a more scholarly manner, described the growth of what he calls "the cult of Muhammad" among Muslims, and ascribed that growth to conscious rivalry with Christians. I should put it in a different way: I should say that the aspersions cast by Christians on a deeply-loved personality caused the Muslims to defend that personality. The modern Muslim doctrine of the sinlessness of all the Prophets does not mean that they were different in their nature from other human beings or that they never made mistakes like other men; the idea is that God guarded them from sins "involving moral turpitude" (to use a modern phrase in vogue in India). That is all that the best of men religiously can claim. Muslims believe that the Prophets were chosen from among the best of men and their belief seems not to disaccord with truth or probability.

The translator in his Preface expresses with, perhaps, unconscious sarcasm a hope that the book will appeal, among others, to "adherents of Islam".

God will recompense those people with good who avoid evil of all kinds, whether great or small, and when they are about to commit evil under a sudden passion, they check themselves and turn away from it. —*The Holy Quran*.

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CROSS *Versus* SWASTIKA—I

A Clash of Creeds in Germany

In 1935 "Ecclesiastical Committees" were set up by the German State with the ostensible purpose of bringing the religious conflict to an end by means of a working compromise under State supervision. A number of "moderates" from amongst the "Confessional" clergy—Bishops Meiser, Wurm, Mahrarens, for example—joined these committees. The main body of the "Confessional Church" rejected them because it regarded them as nothing more than a device for promoting the "totalitarian" claims of the State, other measures, like the arrest, deportation or gaoling of "Confessional" pastors, having failed. Events proved them to be right.

A number of "German Christians"—that is to say, those of the Protestant clergy who had subordinated Christian to National Socialist doctrine and had tried to found a "National Church" professing Christian forms with a National Socialist or neo-Pagan content—joined the committees, and so tried to recover some of the ground they had lost in their struggle against the "Confessional Church" in the first two years of the dictatorship. There is no doubt at all that the "moderates" were sincere men who believed that a compromise was necessary and that it could be prevented from affecting the essentials of Christianity. But they found the committees exactly what most of the "Confessional" clergy expected them to be. After sitting on the committees for many months in a vain effort to end the religious conflict the "moderates" made a declaration in which they expressed their readiness to co-operate in fighting "Bolshevism," but demanded that all anti-Christian propaganda on the part of the German State should cease.

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The authorities forbade the publication of this memorandum. This—and the memorandum itself—left no doubt that the "Ecclesiastical Committees" had failed. Even the "moderates," with their readiness to fight "Bolshevism," realise that compromise is impossible. So does the State, and the committees have now been dissolved.

But it is not enough to study what has passed between the State and the leaders of the Christian Churches (the Roman Catholic leaders have gone much farther than the Evangelical leaders in trying to achieve a working compromise, but they too are finding it impossible).

Great courage and devotion have been shown by ordinary men and women, Roman Catholic as well as Evangelical, in the German religious conflict. Indeed, it was ordinary men and women who won what may have been one of the decisive battles in that conflict.

On November 4, 1936, the Ministry of Home, Educational, and Ecclesiastical Affairs in the State of Oldenburg issued a decree ordering all crucifixes and portraits of Luther to be removed from the schools. (The majority of the population is Roman Catholic, but there is a strong Evangelical minority.)

When the decree was made known in church on Sunday, November 15, there was great emotion, and many women burst into tears. A stir went through the whole district during the next few day. In several towns the mayors offered their resignations. Even officials of the National Socialist party asked to be suspended. In some parishes the party organisations fell to pieces. There was a clamour for a public discussion. Men and women met in groups outside the Ministry. On November 24 a deputation of some two hundred people called on the Minister. He proposed an interim solution, but this was rejected.

The authorities decided to call meetings at which

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the decree would be explained and defended. The "Gauleiter" and Stadtholder of Oldenburg, Roever, addressed a meeting at Loehningen and declared that the decree would not be withdrawn and that the Churches deserved what they got. The demonstrations went on.

A further meeting was called by the Oldenburg Government. It was held in the afternoon of November 25. All the members of the local National Socialist organisations had orders to be present. The hall was packed long before the meeting began, and thousands gathered outside.

Herr Roever arrived and was received in absolute silence. He began to speak about the racial doctrine, about racial doctrine, about the former German colonies and so on. He was interrupted with shouts of "Keep to the subject!" ("Zor sache!"), "What about the crosses?" and the like. But he again talked about colonies. And again he was interrupted. Then he lost his temper and ordered the S. A. into the hall. "We old fighters won't put up with any insults," he shouted. The S. A. tried to restore order, but the disorder only increased. He then appealed to the audience, and for a while there was quiet. He spoke of the spiritual transformation of Germany, but again there were shouts of "Keep to the subject!" "What about the crosses?" He then explained that if the discussion could go on quietly he and the audience would soon learn to understand each other's point of view. The audience began to laugh, whereupon Herr Roever again lost his temper and yelled: "Why don't you cowards (meaning the principal hecklers) show yourselves?" Complete uproar followed.

When quiet was restored Herr Roever came to the point at last and tried to defend the decree. He argued that the clergy had offended against the National Socialist party, whereupon he was again interrupted with shouts of "What has that got to do with us? Keep to the subject! What about the crosses?"

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In the end he gave way and announced that the decree would be withdrawn. The entire audience broke out in uproar but of jubilation this time. Herr Roever tried to go on speaking, but could not make himself heard. He dropped exhausted into his chair. The meeting came to an end. On the 26th the Oldenburg Government issued an order that the crosses and the pictures of Luther were not to be removed from the schools.

It was the first time in the history of the Third Realm that the National Socialist authorities had been forced by the pressure of public opinion to withdraw an order. Pastor Pauli, writing on behalf of the Confessional Church in Oldenburg, declared that "it was the resolute attitude of the Christian population that led to the withdrawal of the decree of November 4." Clemens Augustus, the Roman Catholic Bishop of Münster, addressed a letter to his diocese in which he said :

"Let us thank God . . . He has averted great mischance and has turned our anxiety into joy . . . Shall the first fatal step be taken, here in the Oldenburg Münsterland, the step along Rosenberg's path ?" (The reference is, of course, to Dr. Rosenberg, Hitler's friend and associate, whose "Myth of the Twentieth Century" is the chief handbook of German neo-Paganism.)

The Bishop then goes on to explain that Rosenberg's teaching has the support of Baldur von Schirach, the leader of the "Hitler Youth" and that Rosenberg himself has demanded that the Cross of Christ must be replaced by pagan or national symbols, little by little.

"Little by little." . . . So it was meant to be ! But we understood in time. It was the beginning. "The Cross must go !" First in the schools, so that the children may "bid farewell to the image of Christ. Out of sight, out of mind ! That is what the foes of Jesus hope for ! The Cross must be removed

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from the village streets and highways! Out of sight, out of mind! And then, says Rosenberg, the Cross must be removed from the churches. Christians were to be robbed of their churches—and these were to be placed under a so-called "German Church." Out of slight, out of mind! And this plan, revealed in word so plain, was to have been carried out here in our land. Little by little! Beginning with the removal of the Crosses from the schools . . . . . God preserve, God increase the courage in us all, the courage that bears witness to Christian truth . . . May God the Father, the son, and the Holy Ghost bless you in the sign of the Cross which you have so valiantly defended.

(M. G.)

Islam presents a perfect conception of God and opens the gates of certainty and faith so that men may be saved from the darkness of doubt and error. It leads men to the presence of God in this very life, so that death loses all its terrors for them, and they await its coming with pleasurable anticipations, realising that they have found the truth and have experienced the manifestation of God's attributes, and that death hides nothing but opportunities of limitless progress.

—*Ahmadiyyat or True Islam.*

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NOTES AND COMMENTS

Islam in West :

Leonora Gregory in his article "They have come to 'Heathen' Britons" in the *Daily Herald* tearfully mentions England's new role as a land of Heathenism. He vividly portrays the activities of Islam, Buddhism and Mormonism which have sent their missionaries to redeem her from spiritual distemper. The author dwells at some length on the success of Islam as a creed which fully chimes in with the present-day humour. Socialism has 'caught on'. Christianity is beating hasty retreat before the Message of Moscow, which holds out prospects of new heaven and new earth without God. It would be labouring the obvious to point out the weakness of the creed of the Cross which emphasised the virtue of poverty and spineless surrender to exploitation by the rich. But for this, Marx would not have raised the cry against religion and called it "the Opiate of Masses." There is hardly anything in Christianity to promise economic adjustment and baulk Socialism of its prey.

Islam has now stepped into the breach with a genuine promise of salvation for all and sundry. It eschews the asceticism of Christianity and abhors the "smash-and-grab" activities of Socialism. It seeks to create a change of heart in its followers. What is now needed is a clear exposition of the Message of Islam. It will stem the tide of socialistic ideas. Ahmadiyya Missionaries have achieved a measure of success which augurs well for Islam. Leonora Gregory writes :

> England, which for centuries has sent missionaries to "heathen" lands, is now a "heathen" land itself, receiving missionaries.
>
> Working quietly in London now are representatives of

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world-famous religions, each preaching " the true faith " and making converts from orthodox Christians.

When two Hindu missionaries arrive back in London shortly, they will bring with them funds for the erection of Britain's first Hindu temple and monastery.

Recently work was begun on the first Mormon church to be erected in London. The Moslems and the Buddhists are already established.

Visitors to Southfields who have seen there the white dome of the London Mosque have probably concluded that its purpose was to serve the needs of Oriental Moslems who found themselves temporarily in (to them) a heathen land.

* * *

They may learn with some surprise that there are about 2,000 English people interested in Moslem ideas, and that between 200 and 300 have actually thrown over Christianity and become keen Muslims.

While I was learning these facts from Mr. A. R. Dard, the Imam of the London Mosque, a slim pleasant-faced girl dressed in a blue silk frock came walking across the grass—such a girl as you might see in any street of one of London's quieter suburbs.

She is Miss Sakeenah (formerly Ella) Banks, a convert from Christianity to the faith of Muhammad.

Since she and her sister went over to Islam, her mother, father, and two younger sisters have followed.

They have dropped their Christian names and taken Moslem ones, they attend services regularly in the Mosque, pray in Arabic, and are learning to read the Quran in the original.

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Sakeenah Banks earns her living as a children's nurse. One of her sisters works in a London office. . . .

* * *

The London Mosque has ten voluntary missionaries whose aim is to bring in converts. You will hear them on Sunday afternoons conducting open-air meetings. In the evenings they give lectures, or labour amongst their friends.

" Islam is more socialistic than modern Christianity," the Iman told me, " for Moslems are absolutely forbidden to let money out at interest. In the Moslem world there is no parasitic class living on dividends and interest. Those who hoard money in a bank not only receive no interest, but are forced every year to pay a portion of it back to the workers whence it came.

"A Moslem woman has equal rights of divorce with her husband. Divorce can be had for incompatibility.

"Married women in Moslem countries owned and administered their own property long before the law permitted this in Christian countries."

Church needs a clean-up

There can be no clearer proof of religious indifferentism among Christians than the fact that churches have their attraction not as houses of worship but as ball-rooms. Solemn religious ceremonies fall flat on the people while a crowded programme of musical entertainment draws a big house. Rev. John Penrose in *Answers* of February 6, 1937, has in his article revealed the rotten core of the churches. He seems to be sincerely distressed at the sight of rage for frivolities invading the church. In the course of his article he says :

I believe that the parsons who turn their church halls into ball-rooms and their Sunday-school platforms

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into stages are being unfaithful to the Christ Whom they profess to serve.

Christ's instructions are: "Feed My sheep." A lot of clerics seem to imagine He said: "Amuse the goats!"

The Church's job is to save souls. It was never meant to be an amateur entertainment centre. I know I have often said strong things about the theatre and dance hall of modern times—though in olden times there was frequent ground for criticism, too—but I denounce with far greater vehemence the churches that dabble in these worldly amusements.

I certainly maintain that a mighty reformation is needed in the cinema and theatre, but I believe first of all the Church needs a good clean-up. A clean-up of the outside world would come quicker then.

Is it consistent with the Church's high and noble calling to see placarded on its notice-boards words like these: "At the Church Hall. Whist Drive and Dance. Music by the Crazy Coons Jazz Band"?

Again, was the parson meant to be a theatrical producer, or to play the comedian as a cleric did recently? I cannot imagine Jesus Christ as M.C. at a whist drive, still less can I picture Him in the giddy whirl of the modern dance, or as a character in "Thark"—frequently produced by churches.

Quite apart from the fact that the desperately serious business of rescuing lost souls is our job, it is bad policy to run a church on worldly lines. It has been proved over and over again, other things being equal, that the "worldly" churches are far worse off financially, and send much less to foreign missions.

Again, as a general rule, their services are much more sparsely attended than is the case at the churches run on spiritual lines.

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Moreover, as for the week-night devotional meeting at the worldly churches, IF such meetings are held there, the people are conspicuous by their absence.

Scores of clergy have said to me: "I can pack my church hall for a whist drive or a dance, but when it is a devotional meeting I get three or four, or perhaps half a dozen."

Exactly. Worldliness kills the spiritual life of a place. Where the dance and the theatre rule the church there is no appetite for spiritual food: it is just not wanted.

But you say: "How do you expect to attract people to church without entertainments?"

Jesus Christ is quite a sufficient attraction. If I did not believe it I would get out of the ministry tomorrow.

At the churches where Christ is offered as the only attraction He is found so to satisfy the longings and aspirations even of modern youth that there is no desire for cards, dances, or theatricals.

Our business is to get people soundly converted, to get them to place their lives under the control of Jesus Christ, and a Christ-controlled life has no room for pictures, theatre, dancing, or cards.

The picture—can you imagine Christ sitting there looking at some of those films that have made you feel shamefully uncomfortable? Will it raise the tone of your spiritual life to watch complete strangers slowly disrobing for your entertainment, as regularly happens in the films of to-day?

Is all this business of men and women being shown flirting with other people's wives and husbands going to improve the family life of Britain?

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Take the theatre. Some plays are above reproach, A great many are not. As for the average revue or variety show, obviously it is no place for the professed disciple of Christ.

The smutty jokes, the suggestiveness of much of the conversation, the way God's name is taken in vain, the manner in which sacred things are parodied—these and many other points, to say nothing of the dress, or lack of it, of those taking part ought clearly to show what the true Christian attitude should be.

" What is wrong with a game of cards ? "

So said a mother to a Christian worker in a parish well known to me. He told her what was wrong, but she laughed and said: " I shall encourage my daughter to go to the church whist drives as often as ever she likes."

A few months later a sorrowing mother came to this worker telling him that her heart was broken because her daughter was out every night playing cards for money.

" Yes," she said, " and it is all through the whist drives at St.—'s Church."

How can my fellow-clergy who are head-over-heels in these things conscientiously teach the words of the Catechism, where we are told to " renounce the *World*, the flesh, and the Devil " ?

This article is outspoken, but it is high time someone spoke out. Do not hastily sit down and write me a wrathful epistle. Think again, before writing, and ask yourself if there is not a great deal of truth in what I say. Though straight from the shoulder, it is written by one who longs to see the Church doing her *Real* job.

Lastly, these views may not be popular. They are not the views of the crowd. Yes, any weakling can

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go with the crowd; it takes courage to stand out against the crowd. But if you will do it, you will find it is worth it.

Divorce Laws—"Wicked and Cruel":

Provision of Divorce in Islam evoked jubilant castigation from Christian writers, who are notorious for gleefully pointing to a moat in another's eye, but conveniently forget the beam in their own. No amount of explanation could drive conviction to their minds warped with religious prejudice. But time has vindicated the universality and practicability of the Islamic teachings. There are many festering sores in the heart of Western Society. The royal change-over threw into sharp relief the weakness of the Christian creed to stand the stress and strain of times. Now comes another stinging commentary on Divorce Laws by no less person than Mr. Justice Swift, who calls them wicked and cruel.

In one of his judgments in a discretionary divorce suit at the Birmingham Assize, he says:

> To my mind the divorce laws of this country are wicked and cruel. Over and over again to-day in one case after another I have had the unhappy children of divided parents coming here to prove either that one or other was guilty of adultery." "To my mind it is most terrible that these unhappy people, who have long since made up their minds that they cannot live together—in this particular case they have been separated for sixteen or seventeen years and have both made fresh alliances,—to my mind it is dreadful that, having been separated for all that time, in order that one side or the other may regularise their position and live decently in the eyes of their neighbours it is necessary that a daughter should have to be called to prove her mother's adultery.

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Dreadful—I think it is dreadful. Why cannot some means be devised by those who made our marriage laws to begin with, by those who started their beginning, by the bishops and curates and those who undertake the task of joining people together—why cannot some means be devised by them of permitting their separation without having to bring the product of their union to prove the adultery of one or the other!

"The present system, as I said seventeen years ago when I was first elevated to my present position, is cruel and wicked, cruel to everybody. And we who have to sit here and listen to the painful stories can only wish that something had been done years ago to alleviate the sufferings of those such as I have heard to-day. Nobody seems to think, nobody seems to care about the individuals.

"Those who talk about the sanctity of marriage, those who talk about those whom God hath joined together, those who lay the greatest emphasis upon. "Let no man put asunder" do not see or, if they see it, do not realise the pain and suffering which comes into the witness-box.

"What dreadful stories I have heard to-day," said Mr. Justice Swift, referring to the case with which he was dealing—a case in which the husband and wife had for years been separated. "And now this wretched petitioner separated from his wife and she from her husband for fourteen years, both of them had made other allegiances, come here and tell me they want to be separated. Why should they not be? They have, in fact, in truth, been separated for fourteen years. They want to be separated in law. But in order that they might be separated in law the wretched daughter of her father and mother has got to be brought here to tell me on her oath that she knows that for fourteen years her mother has been living with a man who was not her

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father and her father had been living with a woman who is not her mother."

MUHAMMAD HUSSAIN, B. COM.

Say if your parents and your children and your brothers and your sisters and your wives and your husbands and your kinsfolk and the property which you have acquired and the business the dullness of which you fear, and your dwellings and your homes which you love, are dearer to you than God and his Apostle and striving in the path of God then wait till God issues a decree concerning you, and God loves not those who forget their responsibilities.

—*The Holy Quran.*

If a man is attacked by an evil thought but he suppresses it or drives it out of his mind and does act in accordance with it, God will bestow upon him a good recompense for having so acted.

—*The Bukhari.*

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The Ahmadiyya Movement

THE Ahmadiyya Movement was founded by Hazrat Ahmad, the Promised Messiah and Mehdi and the expected Messenger of all nations. In the spirit and power of all the earlier prophets he came to serve and reinterpret the final and eternal teachings laid down by God in the Holy Quran. The Movement therefore represents the true and real Islam and seeks to uplift humanity and establish peace throughout the world. Hazrat Ahmad died in 1908, and the present Head of the Movement is his second successor, Hazrat Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud Ahmad, under whose direction the Movement has established Missions in many parts of the world, the following being the addresses of some of them:

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(2) THE AHMADIYYA MOVEMENT IN ISLAM,
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(3) THE AHMADIYYA MOVEMENT,
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(7) THE CENTRAL (E.A.) AHMADIYYA
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P. O. Qadian, Punjab (India)

Printed at the Ripon Printing Press, Bull Road, Lahore, by Mirza Mohd. Sadiq and published by Sheikh Abdur Rahman Qadiani for Sadar Anjuman-i-Ahmadiyya Qadian, Punjab, India.